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ABSTRACT

The utility of Rothman's three ideal types of social action as applied to community issues and Extension agents were explored via analysis of condensed case study materials describing decisions and activities surrounding a specific issue in the target county of a Title V (Rural Development Act of 1972) Project in South Carolina. The three Rothman models and the community issues analyzed were: (1) the locality development model as applied to development of a county-wide comprehensive rural fire protection program; (2) the social planning model as applied to extension agents' responses to a request for assistance in exploring alternatives for establishing a county-wide human services campus; (3) the social action model of planned change as applied to provision of adequate community services and facilities to a densely populated minority (black) neighborhood. Analysis indicated that: in the instance of rural fire protection, the role of Extension personnel ranged from emphasis on information gathering/dissemination to efforts to involve and inform a communication network; in the case of the human services campus, the primary extension involvement was fact-gathering and analyzation for decision making; in the case of service and facility provision to a low-income black community, the Extension involvement became more catalytic than directive. (JC)

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The South Carolina Title V Program in Perspective
Three Models of Purposive Change

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Introduction

As any rural community development advocate, practitioner, or researcher is well aware, the question of "What is rural community development?" has yet to be laid to rest. Efforts too numerous to mention have attempted to define it, among other things, in terms of a process, a social movement, a method, or a program (ECOP, 1966: 11). We are still attempting to come up with broadly acceptable definitions of the individual terms "rural", "community", and "development", complicated by the numerous disciplines and government agencies with vested interests in particular operational definitions.

In our experience with county-level Extension professionals and other change agents, municipal and county officials, and voluntary citizens groups with limited experience or training in rural community development, we have found that a formal definition of community development is not important. What is important is how to recognize opportunities to improve the general level of well-being for the citizens of a given locale through collective effort. Secondly, resource agencies are interested in guidelines which help them choose the appropriate role to play at a given point in time in the progress of a change effort and the type and timing of informational inputs and assistance.

While simplistic distinctions between "task accomplishment" and "structure development" (Cartwright and Zander, 1968: 304-314) are necessary and useful, they are not adequate for the types of needs of the practitioners mentioned earlier. Also, the delineation of process phases represented by Beal and Hobbs (1969), Bennett and Nelson (1975), ECOP Task Force (1975: 24), Jacob, et al.(1975: 5-9), and Warren (1963: 315-320), do not answer many of the questions raised by the local practitioners who need some applicable guidelines. Some of these models (Beal and Hobbs, 1969, as an example) become confusing by attempting to be all-encompassing and thereby suggest no less than fifteen "steps", each a detailed process in itself.

These previous efforts represent worthwhile contributions; however, we feel that there is a definite need to facilitate an interplay of ideas concerning rural community development between highly abstract attempts at theory building, case study efforts, simplistic categorization of the types

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of tasks involved in purposive change, and recipe-book type approaches as discussed above. This interplay must take place in an environment supportive of interdisciplinary efforts.

Drawing on some ideas developed in the field of social work, we will attempt to demonstrate the utility of a classification scheme which identified three ideal types of social action as applied to community issues. In reference to each ideal type, condensed case study materials describing decisions and activities surrounding a specific issue in the target county of the Title V (Rural Development Act of 1972) Project in South Carolina will be presented and subsequent discussion will deal with the appropriateness of various types of resource agency inputs under varying situational contexts.

It is hoped that this effort will lead to a further refinement of ideas and elaboration of research efforts in a direction which will facilitate their utility by practitioners.

Rothman's Ideal Types

Social workers, planners and community development specialists, along with sociologists, have attempted to construct all-embracing schemes of community development practice.[1] Such schemes rarely approach the grand level that their authors claim. Each attempt has generally defined development practice in rather narrow, discipline-bound conceptual frameworks. Most have failed to recognize that there is no one method of development practice, but that any of several methods may be applicable. However, each can contribute to a synthesis of ideas, one which can yield a guide for practitioners.

We propose that the method to use, or the role for practitioners to perform at any particular time, should depend upon the historical and situational context of the development issue as well as the organizational goals of the development group or agency represented by the practitioner. In this section we present a scheme that recognizes the diversity of roles and organization goals in community development practice. Later we will attempt to demonstrate by case study the applicability of this scheme for community practitioners, using the concepts of historical/situational context and organizational goals of development groups.

Three general practitioner roles associated with three ideal types of purposive change can be outlined (Rothman, 1970: 24-25), each useful in particular historical/situational contexts and with certain organizational goal structures. These general roles are not intended to cover all situations, but will be used to develop action guidelines for practitioners. In the model of change labeled "locality development" by Rothman, the practitioner role likely to emerge could be labeled encourager or enabler. In this role the practitioner facilitates the process of problem-solving, encourages the organization of community groups,

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1. Taking soical work and the rural community development component of Cooperative Extension as examples, we note a tendency toward convergence in terms of defining the process of community development and role of the development agency (see ECOP, 1966: 2 for an example of the Extension definition and Grosser, 1973 for an example of recent orientation in social work). At the same time, Extension generally utilizes the concept "development" and social work the concept "organization."

and aids in the development of good interpersonal relations. Rothman points out that in this role the practitioner is geared "to the creation or manipulation of small task-oriented groups, and he requires skill in guiding processes of collaborative problem-finding and problem solving" (1970: 10). This practitioner role is typified by community work in adult education, Peace Corps, and the Cooperative Extension Service.

Under the "social planning" model of purposive change the general practitioner role may be termed fact-gatherer or program analyst. Here the practitioner acts as "expert", he diagnoses community problems and provides information, technical assistance, advice on methods or organization and procedure, and collects and analyzes data. Emphasis is placed on providing technical information for decisions directly relating to the task at hand rather than on attempting to influence the process of how decisions are made. Examples of this role predominate in Councils of Government, regional planning commissions and various federal, state, and local bureaus and departments.

Rothman's "social action" model presupposes a disadvantages subgroup that views its interests in direct conflict with those of privileged subgroups. According to Rothman, the general practitioner role likely to emerge in this case is characterized by activities of such groups as Congress on Racial Equality, labor unions, welfare rights organizations, and political action groups. The practitioner functions as an activist or agitator. According to Rothman (1970: 11), this role entails "the organization of client groups to act on behalf of their interests in a pluralistic community arena. The practitioner gears himself to creating and manipulating mass organizations and movements and to influencing political processes." The client groups are generally those with few resources, largely disenfranchised within American society.

Application to Local Issues

Details of the Title V pilot project in South Carolina have been presented earlier (Jacob, 1976; Jacob et al., 1975; and Wynn and Jacob, 1976). In summary, research and extension efforts were concentrated in one rural, low income county in the southeastern part of the state, with personnel associated with the project located both in the county and on the Clemson University campus. With the close familiarity of local issues gained through day-to-day contact, we were able to identify specific issues in the Title V county that approximated each of the three ideal types presented by Rothman and historically document the role that the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service played in each case over a two and one-half year period of time. After comparing the role played by Extension professionals with guidelines extrapolated from Rothman's typologies, judgemental statements will be made concerning the utility of Rothman's schema for assisting community development practitioners in making key decisions relating to the appropriateness of various types of roles at selected points during the "life" of a community issue. Rothman goes one step further by stating that a given community issue can change over time in a manner to accommodate various practitioner roles.

The issue chosen to typify Rothman's "locality development," in which the practitioner plays a process consultant -- encourager, enabler, or facilitator -- role was the development of a county-wide comprehensive rural fire protection program. Outside the corporate limits of the several towns with municipal fire departments, fire protection for residents of the county is virtually

non-existent. This means that approximately 85 percent of the county's residents pay maximum insurance rates and have no publicly provided protection of life and property in case of a residential fire. Numerous brick chimneys standing alone can be spotted throughout the county where once-present homes were burned to the ground because there was no fire protection program existent in the unincorporated areas. The need to do something is clearly documented by these remnants of burned-out residences. Several locally elected officials had looked into the matter but resigned themselves to inaction for the time being when their inquiries led to a realization of the potential costs of a county-wide system.

Being aware of efforts to improve rural fire protection in surrounding counties, Extension personnel first gathered information concerning what had been done and the approaches utilized in those areas. Second, elected officials and other persons whose names were mentioned when rural fire protection had been discussed were contacted to capitalize on their experience. The endorsement of the county government and local planning bodies was sought and obtained. Third, information on the topic was provided to the general public through a series of radio programs and newspaper articles designed to create a greater awareness of the problem. Several public meetings were held in which interested residents had an opportunity to ask questions of persons with experience in establishing rural fire departments in other counties. Concurrent with these developments, the multi-county COG published a regional fire protection study which documented the problem and provided specific cost and benefit data. After information from this report was summarized and presented to the general public, the County Planning Commission organized a county-wide rural fire protection study committee.

A county-wide problem identification survey, while not focusing specifically on the fire protection issue, contributed to the enabler-facilitator role played by Extension personnel. Out of some twenty-five suggested topics, fire protection was the most frequently mentioned problem area among residents in the unincorporated areas of the county.

In summary, the need for improved fire protection in the rural areas was clearly established. The task of providing substantive information to local residents was undertaken by the multi-county COG. Although Extension personnel also contributed to the fact-gathering phase by conducting the county-wide opinion (problem identification) survey, the effort on this issue was to first provide information to a large segment of the general public and second, to facilitate interaction and the flow of information between citizens groups on one hand and the planning bodies and elected officials on the other.

At present, a local Citizens Grassroots Participation Committee with broad county-wide representation has selected rural fire protection as one of the five priority issues for the county and has gone on record as fully supporting the implementation of a county-wide fire protection program. It seems likely that within the next year the county government will set up an advisory referendum to allow the general tax-paying public to voice their opinion concerning the establishment of a county-wide program of rural fire protection.

As indicated previously, the primary practitioner role under Rothman's "social planning" change typology is that of fact-gatherer and analyst with regard to task goals, those relating to specific community problems. In other

words, the emphasis is primarily on task versus process goals. To exemplify this issue we will draw on our experience in responding to a request for assistance in exploring alternatives for establishing a county-wide human services campus. The proposed campus would house the Health Department, the Department of Social Services, Mental Health Clinic, Vocational Rehabilitation office, and the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission -- all within walking distance of the County Hospital. Upon receipt of this request in late 1974, contacts were initiated with the agencies mentioned, local planning commissions, the multi-county COG and the County Health Commission. Although there was general agreement concerning the need to facilitate interaction among agencies with health care related services, to ease the referral effort, and to facilitate transportation, there was little sound information on which to base plans for action. As a consequence, the appropriate role of the Extension staff seemed to be that of fact-gatherer and analyst.

Over a period of approximately ten months, Clemson University Extension and research staff, with assistance from an architectural consultant firm, collected information and prepared a planning report which provided specific details concerning the function of each agency and the interrelationship of those functions, as well as alternative strategies for developing a human services campus. Potential costs and benefits were set forth in general terms by the prepared report. Next, the finished report was presented to groups and agencies that had been involved in the initial planning stages. This presentation resulted in the establishment of a planning committee of representatives of each of the five agencies to be included in the campus and the Executive Director of the County Development Board. The group was vested with the responsibility of studying the feasibility of implementing the ideas presented. Pending a request from the committee for continued assistance, Extension personnel will resume the process consultant role of promoting interagency cooperation and taking the idea back to the general population for their endorsement and renewed support. The aim of such a human services campus being broad in scope, involving at least six different agencies, public interest and support has been slow in forming in comparison with the evolution of such support for the previously mentioned program of rural fire protection.

To typify Rothman's "social action" model of planned change we choose the issue of providing adequate community services and facilities to a densely populated minority neighborhood. This community has a population of some 900 persons and is located adjacent to the corporate limits of a virtually all-white town of approximately 1,000. County-wide, the population is slightly over 60 percent black, yet in this town the proportion black is less than four percent (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1973: 83). These statistics would suggest that the town has unwritten policies which have led to the exclusion of the minority areas from consideration for annexation.

The minority community has inadequate street lighting, unpaved streets, poor drainage, access to city water but no sewage, and a high incidence of inadequate and dilapidated housing. Problems faced by residents of the community have been aggravated over the past several years when the local health department began to enforce regulations dealing with the utilization of individual septic tanks in areas of poor drainage. For the past five years the community has been "condemned" by the health department -- no new homes or businesses can be built and no permits can be issued to install septic tanks or even "privies".

When the Extension staff in the county became aware of the problem, it was obvious that the people of the minority community were discontent but there was little evidence to indicate that a collective approach had been taken. Several of the community leaders had individually approached the town council but were inevitably told that the town could not afford to annex the area and provide all of the needed services. This was interpreted as a brush-off by the minority community's spokesmen and led to further frustration and discontent. Extension personnel on several occasions met with persons from the minority community and with the mayor and town council of the adjoining town. These meetings were used to examine each point of view and to determine the extent of substantive communication between the two groups. Extension personnel decided to work closely with local newspapers, the health department, and the multi-county COG to further document and publicize the needs of the community. A series of articles appeared in local newspapers and a voluntary participation Community Development Council was formed in the community to gather information concerning possible alternatives to solving the problem.

After receiving legal advice, the Community Development Council indicated a petition requesting annexation and the petition was subsequently presented to the town council. At that point, the town council was obligated by law to formally respond to the petition within a specified period of time. For advice, the town council called on representatives of an engineering consulting firm to provide cost estimates of expanding the water and sewer facilities to serve the area requesting annexation. A town manager of a nearby town and professional planners from the multi-county COG were called on to meet with the town council on several occasions in order to assist the council in exploring possible alternatives for responding to the request for annexation. The town council then decided to proceed with a vote of annexation.

A public hearing attended by residents of the community and the town has been held with various resource persons from the consulting firm and the COG present. In the recent vote for annexation -- with the persons in the community and the incorporated town polled separately, residents of the minority community voted overwhelmingly in favor of annexation; however, annexation was rejected by the town's voters. Since a majority of each group must vote in favor for the mandate of annexation to be established, annexation will not take place. Recent information from the community suggests that a boycott of local businesses is being planned in protest to the outcome of the vote.

Utility of Ideal Types

As Rothman (1970: 2) puts so aptly, " . . . in empirical reality there are different forms of community organization practice and at this stage in the development of practice theory it would be better to capture and describe these rather than to attempt to establish a grand, all-embracing theory or conception. The implication is that we should speak of community organization methods rather than the community organization method."[2] As we suggested earlier, the

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2. As noted earlier, the Cooperative Extension Service generally utilizes the term "development" in describing its community-related educational progress whereas social work prefers "organization". Suffice it to say at this point that there is greater agreement than disagreement between social work and Cooperative Extension concerning the general goals and appropriate role of the development agency to warrant a closer working relationship.

practitioner's role depends upon the goals of his agency or group and, within the limits of organizational goals, upon the historical and situational context of the development issue.

Returning to the descriptive information presented in the previous section, we can observe that the practitioner role of the Extension personnel varied considerably depending upon the situational context and developmental stage of the issue in question. Some observations gleaned from our experience deserve more careful examination. In the instance of rural fire protection, (Rothman's "locality development" type) the role of Extension personnel ranged from emphasis initially on the gathering and dissemination of information to efforts to involve and inform the general public and establish a communication network that would facilitate decisions and action. From this point on, the Extension role will be to some degree maintenance of established citizens committees and continuing to provide, directly or via other resource agencies, specific information for decision-making to key groups and individuals. Extension involvement in the rural fire protection issue represents a reasonable approximation to the process orientation mandate for Extension CRD[3] provided by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (1966: 2).

In the case of the human services campus, the primary role throughout was that of fact-gathering and analyzing for decision-making. More than in the previous case there was a rather distinct starting and final step in terms of Extension involvement. Until a firm commitment is made to commit resources to the development of the campus, Extension involvement will be limited to first, periodically providing information concerning alternative sources of funding for such a facility and second, determining whether the study committee needs organizational assistance or orientation in carrying out its job.

The issue of providing community services and facilities to the low-income black community, chosen to approximate Rothman's "social action" type, allowed us to observe a situation in which the assumed predominant practitioner role of activist-agitator was in direct contrast with the mandated role of the Clemson Extension professionals involved. We observed that there was virtually no substantive communication taking place between representatives of the town on one hand and the black community on the other. Furthermore, once we showed sincere interest in the issue, each faction attempted to use Extension personnel as a means for communicating with the other group. While on a limited scale we did attempt to relay information between the two groups, we had to repeatedly remind the key persons that we could not play an advocacy role. By working through the mass media, we assisted in bringing to the public attention the problems and needs of the community and at the same time document the action being taken by the town council in response to this information. As part of that phase we also provided contacts for representatives of the minority community to approach for orientation concerning appropriate procedures for petitioning annexation, the first step in obtaining needed facilities and services. Once the stage had been set for substantive communication, other resource agencies such as the multi-county COG and the engineering consulting firm became involved and began playing the fact-gathering-analyst role. In

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3. Abbreviation for either Community and Resource Development, Community Resource Development, and Community and Rural Development, this designation most often used for state-level Extension efforts.

this case Extension personnel, by helping orient both factions in the basics of problem solving through a re-focusing on the substantive issue at hand, played an effective catalyst role and quite possibly prevented a more serious confrontation or conflict. It is noted however with failure to gain passage of the annexation petition, the community's leaders are more seriously considering conflict-generating tactics such as boycotts and the possibility of the issue being resolved througn cooperative efforts will be reduced on the short run.

Conclusions and Recommendations

We have observed Extension involvement in issues purposely selected to typify Rothman's three development types -- locality development, social planning, and social action -- from the perspective of an Extension CRD Specialist located in the Title V county. It has been our objective to lay the groundwork for utilizing Rothman's schema to make judgements concerning the appropriateness of various practitioner roles and the timing of various inputs.

From our prospective of Extension CRD, we would like to review some of the limitations of the roles associated with each of the three Rothman models. The activist-advocate role associated with the social action model probably holds the least promise. The reason is that the role model is not congruent with the explicitly defined or minimal role limitations of Extension CRD specialists. To play a strong advocacy role for one community interest group would limit the specialist's effectiveness in responding to all groups needing assistance. The locality development model assumes the willingness of all segments of the community to cooperate on an on-going and long-term basis. Often questions are raised along the lines of: who participates and do their interests accurately represent those of the community at large? Experience has shown that by systematically gathering information (i.e., problem identification surveys, resource assessment surveys, etc.) and providing it to the general public, the likelihood of any particular interest group dominating the specialist is reduced considerably. The practitioner who chooses the social planning model as a guide may find that he becomes identified with the power structure or is perceived as an advocate of one group or project over another.

Returning to the case materials presented, it is immediately obvious that no particular practitioner role was ridigly followed. Rather, by classifying the situational context of each issue according to Rothman's schema, we were sensitized to the general pattern of expectations concerning our role on the part of the various groups in the county. For example, we could expect representatives of the minority community and the town to attempt to get us "on their side" of opinion concerning the annexation issue.

The question remains, how can practitioners analytically observe an ongoing development issue and choose the most effective or appropriate role and decide on the timing of various types of inputs associated with that role? What are the critical aspects of a development situation that must be addressed? Initially, the practitioners may seek to evaluate the issue of two basic questions:

1. Who are the groups or individuals involved and what is their relationship to one another? It is important to identify segments of the population that will be affected by development, whether or not each recognizes the potential impact. Conflict may be avoided by initially involving the diverse groups

that will be affected. We suggest, for example, that had the residents of the minority community been meaningfully involved in earlier planning efforts, the near-crisis situation now existing would never have developed. Each group perceives themselves as in a particular relationship to others in the community; "city hall crowd", "the blacks", and "big business" are labels representing such groups. These diverse groups may vary in their assumptions about how community development should be conducted, these assumptions change over time and with different issues. The groups involved and how they view development are important cues for the practitioner.

2. What is the history of the development issue? Development issues generally have long histories. What appears to arise suddenly in a public forum usually had a period of gestation in which incomplete ideas were developed. Practitioners should ask if there has been any prior experience with the particular issue under discussion. Was it successful? What was the role of community subgroups? This will give some clue as to the likely role such groups will play in the current issue. Did the previous involvement result in the development of opinion leaders that may be expected to be involved in the current development issue? By eliciting the answers to questions such as these, practitioners can gain a better understanding of the issue and its probable cause.

Rothman suggests that one particular long-run advantage of using such a framework which recognizes a range of practitioner roles is that "the practitioner takes an analytical, problem-solving stand and does not become the captive of a particular ideological or methodological approach to practice" (1970: 20). We agree and feel that the schema presented by Rothman represent a good starting point. With additional case studies and other research relating to this analytical framework, it should be possible to develop some testable propositions concerning the dynamic properties of community development. For example, how do intergroup relationships change over time and how are they related to indicators of development? Are there generalizable sequences of practitioner roles that are associated with successful development efforts?

We recognize the tendency with such an approach to over-emphasize the microsociological aspects of development, however an analytical framework of the type presented by Rothman appears to offer opportunities for the integration of ideas from various disciplines. This is sorely needed if we can expect to develop "theories of changing" which, according to Hobbs (1971: 12), are "oriented toward identification of variables instrumental for intervention and control."

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APPENDIX I

Rothman's Model of Community Development*

	Locality Development	Social Planning	Social Action
Assumptions concerning community structure and nature of problem	Static traditional community with anomie and lack of integrative mechanisms	No explicit assumptions concerning structure; lack of substantive knowledge concerning identified problems	Concentration of power; social injustice, with deprived subgroups
Basic change strategy	Involvement of broad cross-section in self-help philosophy	Promotion of problem-solving through "experts" -- limited public involvement	Manipulation of interest groups to change balance of power
Assumptions regarding interests of subgroups	Common or reconcilable	Reconcilable or in conflict	In conflict -- not reconcilable
Salient practitioner role	Enabler - catalyst Process consultant	Fact-gatherer and analyst	Activist-Advocate Agitator-Negotiator
Long-range goals	Integrated community, Highly skilled in problem-solving strategy; diffused power	Technically competent formal organizations with adequate data base	Institutional changes to meet needs of disadvantaged subgroups. Redistribution of political power

*Adapted from Rothman, 1970: 25-27.